

Virginia Solar Site Pollinator/Bird Habitat Scorecard

Version 1.0-March 2018

As envisioned, a solar site with excellent habitat is vegetated with native species including a mix of warm season grasses and a diversity of pollinator plants amidst and surrounding the solar panels (Here called the “panel zone”). In this zone, the herbaceous vegetation is mowed only during the dormant season. Invasive species and fescue are eliminated from this zone.

Native plants including woody species where appropriate are used on “buffer land” surrounding the “panel zone”. Added features such as nest boxes and interpretive signage are used.

Insecticides are not applied in any area of the installation. Invasive and non-native plant species are controlled through integrated management approaches with limited usage of herbicides when required.

The site has implemented a detailed establishment, monitoring, and maintenance plan

When employed at a solar facility, these measures will provide benefits to the environment in a number of key areas including 1) storm water retention, 2) biodiversity/wildlife/bird habitat enhancement, 3) carbon sequestration, and 4) pollinator services.

Scoring criteria:

1. Within the panel zone, percent of overall site cover with native plant species listed in the Virginia Solar Site Native Plant Finder (max. 60 points):

a. 1-15 percent cover	2 points
b. 16-30 percent cover	15 points
c. 31-50 percent cover	30 points
d. 50-75 percent cover	45 points
e. 75 percent cover or greater	60 points

2. Within the panel zone, percent of cover in native species used by pollinators as listed in the Virginia Solar Site Native Plant Finder (max. 50 points):

a. 1-15 percent cover	5 points
b. 16-30 percent cover	15 points
c. 31-50 percent cover	30 points
d. 50 percent cover or greater	50 points

3. Within the panel zone, percent of cover for remaining vegetation in warm season grasses listed in the Virginia Solar Site Native Plant Finder (max. 30 points):
 - a. 1-15 percent cover 5 points
 - b. 16-30 percent cover 15 points
 - c. 31-50 percent cover 30 points
 - d. 50 percent cover or greater 15 points
4. Within the panel zone, number of native species with >2 percent cover used by pollinators as listed in the Virginia Solar Site Native Plant Finder (max. 20 points):
 - a. 1-9 species 5 points
 - b. 10-19 species 10 points
 - c. 20 or more species 20 points
5. Seasons that will have at least 3 blooming species with >2 percent cover each (max. 30 points):
 - a. Spring (March-May) 10 points
 - b. Early Summer (June-July 15) 10 points
 - c. Late Summer (July15-Aug) 5 points
 - d. Fall (Sept-Nov) 5 points
6. Management practices implemented for promoting pollinator habitat (max. 45 points):
 - a. Mowing in dormant season only 10 points
 - b. Development of detailed establishment plan 5 points
 - c. Development of detailed monitoring plan 10 points
 - d. Development of detailed and adaptive management plan including invasive species control 10 points
 - e. >1 Bee nesting habitat feature (boxes/tunnels) per acre 5 points
 - f. >1 Bird nest box per acre 5 points
7. Vegetation buffer/screen area with flowering plant species listed in the Virginia Solar Site Native Plant Finder as used by pollinators (max. 20 points):
 - a. 10-50 percent cover 10 points
 - b. 50 percent cover or greater 20 points
8. Remaining vegetation buffer/screen area in other native species (max. 20 points):
 - a. 10-50 percent cover 10 points
 - b. 50 percent cover or greater 20 points
9. Signage/Education about bird and pollinator habitat/benefits (max. 10 points):
 - a. 2 or more signs legible and accessible identifying pollinator habitat 5 points
 - b. Accessible Bench and education display 5 points
10. Pesticide risk:

- a. Planned on-site insecticide use -40 points
- 11. Incompatible plant species risk:
 - a. Combined cover of fescue >10% -25 points
 - b. Combined cover of species on DNH invasive plants list >10% -25 points

Maximum points available: 285

Meets Standard: 145

Provides Exceptional Habitat: 230